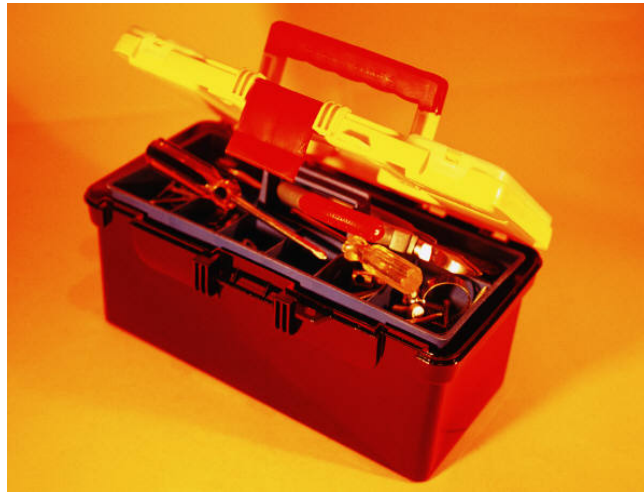


Building Successful Transitions



Community-Based Programs for Youth

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Building Successful transitions (Community-Based Programs for Youth)

Mission Statement: United Neighborhood Development Corporation doing business as Building Successful Transitions has taken a proactive and collaborative multi-community approach to help inner-city; foster care, and/or probation youth overcome barriers of: teen pregnancy, substance use/abuse, homelessness, and joblessness to successful transitions to independence at the age of 18 and over.

Throughout the state of California, youth who transition from inner-city, foster care, and/or probation at the age of 18 lacks the tools necessary to overcome barriers of academic failure, lost placement, unemployment, and thus become "forgotten." Therefore, it is our mission to make the "forgotten" youth "unforgettable" with success building tools from supervised peer-mentoring programs.

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

This presentation is to inform you about new community-based programs for youths called, **Supervised Peer-Mentoring**. The purpose of one **Supervised Peer-Mentoring Program**, specifically "If I Had Only Known, will be to provide an education group in the form of classes, workshops and information sessions to teen girls within the community, foster care, on probation, and/or gang association/affiliation, to help them overcome barriers and make good choices on issues they are confronted with daily in the community and in dating relationships. Issues include but are not limited to, teen pregnancy, sexuality, nutrition, peer pressure, alcohol and drugs, and continued support for living independent at the age of 18 and over.

Supervised Peer-Mentoring will help provide teen girls the chance to learn about themselves and their bodies, teen pregnancy, about the consequences of engaging in at-risk behaviors, to realize their options and opportunities to become productive members of our society. Through **If I Had Only Known**, providing of education and information it will be possible to improve the lives of the teen girls of the community. Parent or guardian involvement will be a necessary component of all programs.

We are now seeking help from Foundation's to support our efforts to implement our community-based programs and activities to benefit hundreds of teen girls who are at-risk in our community. For Building Successful transitions (BST), a grant from a foundation, or private source would mean new opportunities for educational enrichment and growth.

STATEMENT OF NEED

According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, (2004), teen mothers and their babies as well as inner city, at-risk, probation, and foster care youth are at risk for numerous barriers to success such as school failure, poverty, and physical or mental illness. They usually experience several emotions (anger, guilt, and denial). They tend not to seek proper medical care or nutrition.

Along with this, teen girls face other barriers while growing up and trying to maintain a good quality of life within their communities. Today where the many social pressures combined with lack of information and education for preventing the social pressures are putting teen girl's lives at serious risk of HIV/AIDS and STDs, drug and alcohol abuse, school violence, teen pregnancy, school dropout, homelessness, joblessness, and others. Youth are our future and their help in going green is essential it is our responsibility to assure they are educated and given the proper tools to help become a successful independent adult in their community.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), teen girls between the age of 13 and 19 have the fastest increasing rates of HIV/AIDS infection. Also, each year one-quarter of the estimated 12 million new cases of STDs, other than HIV, in the U.S. occur among teenagers. These numbers are alarming and indicate that more education programs geared toward teen girls on diseases and conditions are needed. Many teen girls

probably would not have been infected with these diseases and conditions had they learned more about the consequences of at-risk behaviors.

Unintended Pregnancy, one in eight young women ages 15 to 19 become pregnant each year, and that the pregnancy among young women can reduce completed levels of education and can increase welfare dependency. Sexually active ninth-grade girls (24.5 percent) had used alcohol or drugs during their last sexual intercourse.

Drug and alcohol abuse among teen girls, research statistics show, that girls are beginning to drink at younger ages, 10yrs. to 14-year old girls use alcohol. In the last 20 years 10 to 14-year old girls' alcohol use increased from 7% to 31%, 34.5 percent of them have drunk alcohol before age 13.¹ Young girls (23 percent) now binge drink.²

The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention at SAMHSA, Nelba Chavez, Ph.D., SAMHSA's administrator, said: "A landmark study tells us conclusively that substance abuse is an increasingly significant problem for women in this country, and it's a problem that is starting earlier and earlier in girls' lives. We need to be providing girls with greater support and a more empowered view of their future during their vulnerable early teen years."

School violence statistics show that (30.3 percent) of teenage school girls had been in physical fights during the last 12 months, and (2.8 percent) of teen girls had been injured in a physical fight.³ Teen girls being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property (19.3 percent).⁴ To name a few, these basic statistics and other social pressures these teen girls face today indicate that education and information among teen girls is crucial. Values instilled in teen girls will help them make positive decisions and behavior choices.

In response, Building Successful Transitions will help ensure that teen girls in foster care, probation, and inner-city community learn the skills and knowledge needed to live enriched lifestyles.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Supervised peer-mentoring is utilizing the experience and success of the mentee's peers. Peer-mentors with the aid of supervisors and training will assist teen mothers and/or teen girls by presenting them with the tools necessary to become independent at the age of 18 and over. One board member summed it up with: Children are like butterflies. They deserve to be loved, nurtured, educated, firmly guided, and treated fairly if we expect them to be

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2002. Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 2008, Table 22. *MMWR: CDC Surveillance Summaries* 49 (No. SS-5):1-94.

²CDC. 2008. YRBSS, 2001, Table 20. *MMWR: CDC Surveillance Summaries* 49(No.SS-5):1-94.

³CDC. 2008. YRBSS, 2001, Table 10. *MMWR: CDC Surveillance Summaries* 49(No.SS-5):1-94.

⁴CDC. 2009. YRBSS, 2001, Table8. *MMWR; CDC Surveillance Summaries* 47(No., SS-3):1-89.

independent. Teen mothers are just that teens. They have unfortunately landed in a place, of motherhood, have not yet learned, nor lived long enough to develop the skills needed for successful parenting. We as mentors, educators, counselors, supervisors/ trainers, have a responsibility to assist them in overcoming barriers. It is theirs as well as their baby future. The tools we impart must be effective, profound life lessons that teen mothers will be able to use when we are not present. Working with a population of timid, unsure, uneducated mothers, yes mother; who are still children themselves will take patience, dedication, and commitment as well as ongoing support. They are impressionable, easy to scar, and may be dealing with mental health issues.

Teen mothers as well as other youth need understanding and skill building in the areas of self-esteem, self management, patient with their young children, lessons on love that can be shown in Parenting classes since they may have come from a place where love was never offered. They need money management, job search abilities, completing resumes, filling out applications, anger management, goal setting, and limit setting. Learning how to take time for them to regroup when things are not going well is a very important life lesson. They may want to open up, but may be fearful of trusting. Offering them our wisdom and experiences in positive parenting about building family bond with their children, may be the catalyst to opening a relationship they never thought possible. Teen mothers and all youth need to be educated about their child's illnesses, behaviors, education, nutrition, growth indicators, dreams and future. We must be of the belief that their future is at stake; they must be educated about their own future, their education, and dreams if they are to become affective, and successful parents.

It has been shown that teens tend to listen to their peers more than adults .It is BST's hope that positive peer pressure will help motivate the young teens to stay in school, seek employment and maintain good job relations, decrease and/or discontinue substance use, help build self-esteem when all seems hopeless, and advocate for abstinence and/or safe sex practices.

BST supervised peer-mentoring program will meet the individual or group needs of at-risk youth and/or youth in foster care (BBBS, 2004). BST's supervised peer- mentoring program will be used within the school system, community, and group home setting for at-risk young teen females and/or youth in foster care or probation settings In order to increase awareness about barriers experienced such as unexpected pregnancies, homelessness, unemployment, poor school attendance, incarceration, and substance use/ abuse.

The BST supervised peer- mentoring program will provide peer-mentoring to youth age 14 and over transitioning from foster care and other at-risk venues. Specifically, BST's supervised peer-mentoring programs will help support expectant teen mothers during and after the delivery of the child. Each youth will be assisted towards independent living by being provided with parenting classes, nutrition, safe sex practices, self-esteem building, resiliency, anger management, social skills training, substance counseling, vocational education, and tutoring. In addition, the programs will provide ongoing training to peer-mentors on diversity, rapport building, and motivational guidance to help produce successful outcomes.

Methods and Community Risk Factors

Approximately 90% of our youth are left home alone between the hours of 2pm and 6pm Building Successful Transitions will provide educational groups and didactic activities through classes, workshops and other supervised activities designed to meet the needs of teen girls focusing on:

- * Preventing AIDS and STDs
- * Preventing Teen Pregnancy
- * Conflict Resolution
- * Avoiding Peer pressure
- * Self-esteem
- * Academic Achievement
- * Skill Building/Envitro Learning
- * Career counseling and Job referrals
- * Building Resiliency

It is believed that with Supervised Peer-Mentoring programs, teens within the community, inner-city, foster care, and/or probation needs will be met. There are seven supervised peer-mentoring programs; If I Had Only Known (teen parenting age 13 -18), Anger Management For Teens (age 13-18), Greif and Loss (age 13-18), Teen Insight (age 14-16), Young Adult (age 17-18), Supervised Peer-Mentoring (age 14-18), and Alcohol and Drugs (age 4-18)

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Building Successful Transitions was founded in North Hollywood, California as a nonprofit educational organization in 2010. It has also been designated as a tax exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Building Successful transitions is dedicated to providing supervised peer-mentoring programs along with helping youth tell their story using the tools of art, music, media, and dance. Instructional television and other computer based devices will be made available for teens in an effort to augment their community progress and social skills so they may overcome the numerous barriers placed before them as they navigate from inner-city, foster care, and/or probation to independent living at the age of 18 and over.

Building Successful transitions will become an asset to the community, with collaboration with programs in Los Angeles, California that was created to enrich youth. Collaboration with centers will help make communities safe for all youth. There are art centers, recreational centers, remedial centers and libraries that can help establish a relationship with Listen Dream and Think to create an environment to assist youth in their developmental and social skills as well as cultural and educational skills.

The Groups will be conducted Monday – Friday, service hours will be 10:00 am to 8:00 pm giving an opportunity for teens to create a community service for their needs and activities. Helping teens with referrals to other social agencies (medical clinics, aides testing, parenting, tutoring) will allow collaboration which is a necessary building block for the community.

Orientation and training will be monthly for all peer-mentor, supervisors, mentors, and volunteers, newsletters will go out on a quarterly basis to the community making them aware of all the programs being offered. Semi-annual community “open forum” meetings will be conducted to address concerns and questions in an effort to serve all the needs of the community and mentees. Building Successful Transitions will be a company that is a part of a community that will give at risk, inner-city, foster care, and/or probation youth and their families tools to having better social skills, improved self-esteem, avoidance of violence/gang life, no unplanned pregnancies, and higher educational aspirations for a better chance in today’s society.

EVALUATION

The evaluation will be conducted by an Independent Evaluator. The evaluation will be conducted in collaboration with Building Successful Transitions staff. The data necessary to evaluate will be derived from review of post surveys and questionnaires of the young girl's involvement in the programs, and parents, to provide feedback. The Independent Evaluator after six months will compare accomplishments with stated goals and objectives, as well as the success of the programs and activities.

Time Line (One Year)

As indicated above, funding is requested for a one year program that will be implemented as follows:

Month One

- * Advertising of Program staff positions
- * Location of Office Space
- * Program planning and design

Month Two

- * Interviewing of candidates for Program staff positions
- * Finalizing location of Office

Month Three

- * Selection/hiring of Program staff members
- * Preparation for Office operation

Month Four - Twelve

- * Program implementation

Month Six - Twelve

- * Conducting of six evaluation
- * Final evaluation at end of twelfth month

FUTURE FUNDING: Other sources of funds will be secured from special events as well as fund raising activities, to continue serving the needs of teens within the communities.